

Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships

Thursday, February 23, 2017

Caroline Wozniacki

Press Conference

C. WOZNIACKI/C. Bellis

6-3, 6-2

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Satisfying match for you?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah. You know, to be through and into the semifinals -- you know, she came out firing from the start. She had nothing to lose so she just went for it.

I stepped into the court a little bit after being down 3-1 and just tried to keep the pressure on her, make her think a little bit, not give her too many free points. You know, it worked out.

Q. How difficult is it to play such a very good young player?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Well, I have been there myself, so I know what it's like. I just try to put myself in her shoes. For me, it was just very important to, you know, stay strong and not show any negative emotions but just stay positive all the time, show that I have the presence on court and really make her play those extra balls and points.

She would really have to play on a really high level to beat me, because I just -- I was going to give that extra ball back. I wasn't going to just give it to her.

Q. Six years in a row you have gotten to the semis or better. Your thoughts on that?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think it's the court, the crowd, I guess, and usually the good weather, no rain (smiling).

I think it's just a mix of everything. The ball goes pretty quickly through the air. The court is pretty fast. I feel I get to the balls still very well. I run very well on these courts, but at the same time, I feel like I can put pressure on the opponent and make them feel like they have less time.

Q. You looked pretty amused when the rain started coming and going. How much of that was just what happened last week and just feeling like this



is what's happening these days for you?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: At this point, I was just, it's me. I'm bringing the rain (smiling).

You know, even in Doha and in Dubai, I come and it's raining. I step on the court and it's raining. I was, like, this is deja vu from Doha last week.

At the same time, I'm, like, I have a winning record with this rain. Just bring it on. I'm ready for it.

Q. Does it feel like you have played nine matches in nine days? Your body, physically, everything?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Yeah, it feels like I have played a lot more, actually, more mentally than anything because, yeah, last week was really a killer mentally more than anything, because we had to wait.

I was always, every day, except from -- no, from the first day, I was the first one to arrive onsite and the last one to leave.

That definitely took a lot out of me. This week has been a lot easier in that regard because of the hotel and the courts are right there. I could sleep in and everything.

Q. Thoughts about tomorrow?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: She's a player that mixes the pace up quite a bit. She's definitely going to try and get me out of my own rhythm. I'm just excited to play and be in the semifinals once again.

Q. Is it harder for a 17-year-old to make their mark now than, say, when you did it?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I don't know. I think it's hard to say when you're in it. You know, you just play, you do your best.

I think, regardless, I think it's hard as a youngster to make your mark. You have the players with a lot of experience, you have other young players that are hitting really hard and on a good day can beat anyone.

You know, it's a big mix, but I think someone like CiCi has a great game. She takes the ball on the rise. She's pretty quick on her feet, and I think that will bring her far.

She's definitely going to gain experience over the next couple of years. This year, for her, I think, is going to be easier than next year because she has no pressure. Everything that she wins is going to be a plus.

Next year, having to defend that and people starting to know her, will be a little tougher, but I have no doubt that she's going to come up out and just get better from that. She seems like a hard worker. I'm excited to see what the future holds for her.

Q. How much of an advantage is it for her -- she seems very poised, like she doesn't get down on herself. How important at a young age is that?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I think it's very important. Especially there will always be ups and downs, and especially if they are starting to go through a little bit of a tough time, the fact that she's very positive and keeps going through her game plan, I think that will help her a lot.

Q. Do you remember when it stopped being, you know, a game? Juniors, it's fun, all your friends are around, it's relaxing. Then you transition on to the senior tour. Maybe there is a bit of a residual fun-and-games aspect of it, but then it turns into this is my full-time job?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: To be honest, it was almost more stressful playing juniors (smiling).

Q. Oh, really?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: I don't know why. Playing for that trophy, I was, like, I better win this trophy. I don't know if I'm ever going to make it as a professional.

I don't know. I have always had the love for the game, but I think as you make it on the pro tour, you kind of settle in and you know that, okay, I belong here. This is your dream. You're living your dream.

For me, that was kind of, like, Okay, this is what I'm supposed to do and meant to do. I kind of felt like it was easier in some way.

Q. Does it feel like a job?

CAROLINE WOZNIACKI: Of course, it's not always great fun and we have to spend so many hours on court every day practicing and things like that, so those days, it does feel like a job. And no matter if you want to play or not, you have to go out there and keep grinding.

But tournaments like these, when you're playing well and playing in front of a big crowd, it definitely feels more as just something fun and something nice to do.

So it depends on what day you ask (smiling).